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**PATRIOT & SAINT**

The Life Story

of

**Father Alvares/Bishop Mar Julius I**

**Panjim**

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## CHRONOLOGY

- 1774 - Coming to Goa of Dom José Pedro da Camara as Governor and Dom Frei Francisco da Assunção e Brito as Archbishop with Pombal's "Instructions" to put an end to racial discrimination in both civil and ecclesiastical appointments.
- 1777 - Pombal's downfall on King Dom José's death. Reversal of the policy of racial equality by succeeding Governors, Dom Frederico Guilherme de Souza Holstein (1778-1786) and Francisco da Cunha e Meneses (1786-1794) and Archbishop Dom Frei Manuel de S. Catarina (1784-1812).
- 1787 - Pintos' Revolt due to the reversal of anti-discriminatory policy, hatched by a group of priests and army officers, betrayed to civil as well as ecclesiastical authorities and put down with a heavy hand.
- 1822 - Election of two Goans, Bernardo Peres da Silva and Constancio Roque da Costa, along with a Portuguese, A.J. de Lima Leitão, to the *Cortes* (Jan. 20). Promulgation of a Liberal Constitution in Portugal (Sept. 23).
- 1831 - Archbishop S. Galdino dies and the Goa See remains vacant till 1844.
- 1834 - Suppression of religious orders by Minister J.A. de Aguiar in Portugal and overseas possessions.
- 1835 - Bernardo Peres da Silva comes to Goa as Prefect (Governor with wider powers) and is sworn in on 14th January but is overthrown on 1st February.
- 1836 - Fr. Alvares born (29th April, not 3rd May 1837, as stated by some).



- 1838 - Pope Gregory XVI's brief "*Multa praeclare*", declaring the *Padroado* a revocable contract and extinguishing the dioceses of Cochin, Cranganore, Mylapore and Malacca, suffragan to Goa Archdiocese, and replacing them by Vicariates Apostolic under *Propaganda Fide*.
- 1844 - Silva Torres sent to Goa by the same Pope with the Bull "*Divina. . disponente clementia*", appointing him Archbishop, and Brief "*Cum propter*", restricting his jurisdiction to the Goa territory. . He makes public the Bull but suppresses the Brief, is reprimanded by the Holy Father (1854) and eventually recalled (1849), the Archdiocese remaining vacant till 1862.
- 1853 - Pope Pius IX's Brief "*Probe nostis*" censoring Macau Bishop Mata for exercising his episcopal authority in Colombo and Bombay on his way back home and suspending and excommunicating four native priests, whom the Portuguese Parliament proclaims, along with the Bishop, "*beneméritos da Patria*".
- 1857 - Concordat between the Holy See and Portugal (put into operation only in 1862) restricting *Padroado's* jurisdiction to Goa, Cochin, Cranganore and Mylapore.
- 1859 - Fr. Alvares completes the Seminary course and goes to Bombay.
- 1862 - Is ordained by the Bombay Vicar Apostolic, Bishop Stein, S.J.
- 1867 - Returns to Goa.
- 1870 - Starts a charitable association in Panjim (13th September).
- 1877 - Takes over the editorship of "A Cruz" on the illness of its founder, Fr. Manu-

el Agostinho de Carvalho.Opens a secondary school (23rd July) with the blessings of Archbishop Ornellas e Vasconcellos.

- 1878 - A cholera epidemic breaks out in Goa. Fr. Alvares comes to the rescue of its victims.
- 1882 - Archbishop Valente bans "A Cruz". Fr. Alvares launches another weekly, "A Verdade".
- 1883 - Starts two more periodicals, "O Progresso de Goa" and "Times of Goa".
- 1885 - Outbreak of another cholera epidemic in Goa. Fr. Alvares publishes a booklet on directions for its treatment.
- 1886 - Concordat creating the diocese of Daman and the Vicariates Forane of the Ghats and Canara.
- 1886 - Delivers a lecture on the situation in Goa (27th Aug.) and a speech on "Padroado" (21st October).
- 1887 - Joins the Syrian Orthodox Church.
- 1889 - Is consecrated Bishop of Goa, India (excluding Malabar) and Ceylon, under the name and style of Mar Julius I (29th July).
- 1894 - Returns to Goa and launches the weekly "O Brado Indiano".
- 1895 - Maratha Sepoy Mutiny.Dada Ranee Revolt. Sedition. Fr. Alvares is arrested, tried as seditious, but acquitted,yet continues to be harassed by both civil and ecclesiastical authorities.
- 1896 - Leaves Goa again.
- 1898 - Publishes the pamphlet "A Supremacia Universal na Igreja de Christo" and



"Antioch and Rome".

- 1910 - Proclamation of a Republic in Portugal. (5th October).
- 1911 - Promulgation of the Law of Separation of the Church and the State.
- 1912 - Fr. Alvares returns to Goa.
- 1913 - Dies in Mesericordia hospital (23rd, not 24th Sept., as stated by some.)
- 1927 - A memorial is erected at St. Ines cemetery by his fellow citizens.
- 1967 - The Syrian Orthodox Church Metropolitan Mathews Mar Athanasius, of dioceses outside Kerala, later Basilius Mar Thomas Mathews, Catholicos of the East, visits Goa and establishes a community of his church here.
- 1982 - Fr. Alvares' mortal remains are enshrined in St. Mary's church, under construction in Ribandar.
- 1983 - A Khabar is erected on the 60th death anniversary of Mar Julius I.

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## INTRODUCTION

Fr. Antonio Francisco Xavier Alvares was a Goan Roman Catholic priest, and a very devout and pious one, who, on account of differences with the then Archbishop, the haughty and flamboyant Dom Antonio Sebastiao Valente, took, at the age of 50, the dramatic decision of joining the Syrian Orthodox Church of Malabar, in which he was elevated to episcopal dignity under the name and style of Mar Julius I. But, for the rest of his life, he remained known, at least in Goa, simply as Fr. Alvares, if not, for such was then the mentality of the Roman Catholics, as the "schismatic" Fr. Alvares.

He was born in relative affluence into a well-off family of the landed gentry of Salcete. But because of a chequered career, during which he suffered a lot at the hands of both civil and ecclesiastical authorities, he spent the last years of his life in utter poverty, reduced to begging from door to door in order to support himself and the poor he had taken under his care, eventually dying in a general ward bed of a charitable hospital, where he had been admitted as a pauper.

He was once stripped of his episcopal garments and paraded only with his underwear in a horse-driven car through the streets of Panjim by an arrogant Portuguese army officer then holding the post of *Administrador do Concelho das Ilhas* (Tiswadi), Capt. Gomes da Costa, who had a grudge against him. But when he died, his body, in a bishop's full regalia, complete with the mitre and the crozier, after lying in state for a full day in the hall of the Municipal Corporation, was carried in a huge funeral procession, in which thousands participated, to the Santa Ines cemetery. Here, however, though the cemetery was a secular one, under the care of the Municipality, he was buried in a secluded corner, as a religious outcaste.

Looked down upon as an eccentric, if not an



outright crank by the people of Goa at large, because of some of his postures both on religious and political matters, he was, nevertheless, acknowledged by the discerning ones among his fellow-citizens as a truly great man, endowed with outstanding qualities of head and heart. He was indeed a man of many parts - a pious priest and a zealous missionary, a prolific writer, a powerful orator and a militant journalist, a selfless philanthropist and an apostle of charity, a noted educationist and a promoter of education, a dedicated social worker, a daring revolutionary and an alert political activist, all rolled in one. But, above all, he was an ardent patriot, who had the good of his beloved Goa at heart, and a saintly man, full of love and compassion for the lowly and down-trodden.

Because he lived in different parts of the country and engaged in different kinds of work, the story of his life has been divided in this book into seven successive periods: (I) 1836-1859 covering his childhood and adolescence till he completed the Rachol Seminary course; (II) 1859-1867, eight years he spent in Bombay, where he joined a Jesuit high school, was ordained (1862) and stayed on for another five years; (III) 1865-1888 - over two decades he lived in Goa, during which time he made a mark as a pious priest, a selfless philanthropist, a keen educationist and a fearless journalist; (IV) 1887-1895, when, on joining the Syrian Orthodox Church, of which he was later consecrated a bishop, he engaged himself in missionary and, then, pastoral work in North and South Canara and Sri Lanka; (V) 1895-1896, a couple of years only, but which proved the most calamitous of his life, during which he was arrested, tried as a seditious but honourably acquitted, and yet continued to be harassed by civil as well as ecclesiastical authorities; (VI) 1895-1912 - another period spent in Malabar and Sri Lanka in pastoral activities; and (VII) 1912-1923, the last years of life he spent in Goa, weary and impoverished, till his death at the

ripe old age of 87.

After rendering an account of the seven consecutive periods of his life, in chronological order, an attempt is also made in this book to assess, one by one, the various facets of his multi-faceted personality as well as to offer a critical estimate of his many writings.

A little over half a century after his death, with many persons who knew him in flesh still living, the Goans, alas, have all but forgotten this patriotic priest, who valiantly fought for their rights and interests, but who was excommunicated by the Roman Catholic Church as a schismatic and damned by the Portuguese Government as a traitor. But, as if to avenge his memory, the Syrian Orthodox Christians are now duly honouring this saintly man, whose mortal remains they have enshrined in their St. Mary's church in Ribandar as well as in their mission centre at Brahmavar and whose intercession, they claim, is never sought in vain. If this little book succeeds in reviving Goans' interest in this great Patriot and Saint and making better known to non-Goans his life and achievements, I shall deem my endeavour to have been amply rewarded.

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## THE BACKDROP

While Enlightenment came to Portugal through the so-called "*estrangeirados*" (foreignized), men like Cunha Brochado (1651-1733), Dom Luis da Cunha (1662-1749), Alexandre de Gusmao (1688-1758), the Marquis of Pombal (1699-1782), Francisco Xavier de Oliveira (1702-1783), Luis Antonio Verney (1713-1793), Martinho de Melo e Castro (1716-1795) and others who, having been to foreign countries (whence the appellation "foreignized") on diplomatic assignments or simply as students, had absorbed the new progressive ideas during their stay abroad, Liberalism entered the country with the French soldiers during the three Napoleonic invasions in 1807, 1809 and 1810, the ideas of the French Revolution being also propagated by the so-called "*afrancesados*" (gallicized) men like the Duke of Lafoes (1719-1806), Filinto Elisio (1734-1819), Jose Anastacio da Cunha (1744-1787), Felix de Avelar Brotero (1744-1829), Ribeiro dos Santos (1745-1818), the Marchioness of Alorna (1750-1639), Barbosa du Bocage (1756-1805) and others.

But, whereas Enlightenment brought about only a peaceful revolution in ideas without any alteration of law and order, Liberalism ushered in a period of political turmoil and administrative instability, with revolts and counter-revolts, coups and counter-coups, revolutionary and counter-revolutionary movements, Prince, later King Dom Pedro IV and his daughter, Queen Dona Maria II, swearing by Liberal ideas, and his younger brother, Prince, later King, Dom Miguel and the Dowager Queen, Dona Carlota Joaquina, ever plotting to reverse the trend.<sup>1</sup>

The situation in Goa faithfully reflected the state of affairs in Portugal, with the progressives and liberals keen on bringing the colony on par with the metropolis in this respect and the reac-

tionaries and absolutists resisting the change. An added factor in Goa was the fight between the Europeans and Luso-descendants, on the one side, and the Natives, or Indigenes, as they were then called, on the other, the former making a determined bid to retain their social and political hegemony, and the latter trying to assert themselves under the new dispensation.

Compounding further the situation in India were the constant conflicts of jurisdiction between the archbishop and bishops of *Padroado Português do Oriente* (Portugal's Patronage of the Church in the East) and the Vicars Apostolic of the newly created Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith (*Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide*) in "Padroado" dioceses but in territories no longer under Portuguese political control. These conflicts assumed at times such scandalous proportions that the Holy See refrained from making fresh appointments for the Padroado dioceses when they fell vacant, the vacancies lasting for long periods.

In 1774, because his anti-discriminatory policy was not implemented by either civil or ecclesiastical authorities, the Marquis of Pombal, the all-powerful Prime Minister of King Dom Jose, sent as his trusted men Dom Jose Pedro da Camara as Governor and Dom Frei Francisco da Assuncao e Brito as Archbishop with his famous "Instructions" in order to put an end, once for all, to the prevailing discrimination based on race or colour, which they both actually did. But, with Pombal's downfall on Dom Jose's death (1777), the succeeding Governors, Dom Frederico Guilherme de Souza Holstein (1779-86) and Francisco da Cunha Meneses (1786-94) and Archbishop Dom Frei Manuel de S. Catarina (1784-1812), reversed the policy of racial equality, and this was the main cause for the so-called Pintos' Conspiracy, organized by a band of priests and army officers, leaked out to both civil and ecclesiastical authorities and quelled with ut-



most savagery.

Matters became much worse when, on Santa Catarina's death (1812), Dom Frei Manuel de S. Galdinho took over. A dyehard reactionary, he opposed loath and nail the 1822 Liberal Constitution and went to the extent of inciting the people of Bardez to revolt, in which he was opposed by Lt.Col. José de Assa, an European, Fr. Pedro António Ribeiro, of Pilerne, Fr. José Mariano Cardoso, of Candolim, Lawyer Eusébio Mariano Lourenço Goes of Calangute, and others, with the result that, feeling insecure, he even had to seek refuge in Sunquerim, across the border, where he stayed for one and half years. When Dom Miguel restored absolute rule in Portugal in 1828, he was enthusiastically supported by the Goa Prelate. But S. Galdinho died soon thereafter (1831), and the Archdiocese remained vacant for thirteen long years till 1844, also because, with the suppression of religious orders by Minister Joaquim António de Aguiar in Portugal (1834), relations between the Holy See and Lisbon had become strained.

Meanwhile, with the advent of Liberalism, Goa was given parliamentary representation and on January 20, 1922 an electoral assembly presided over by the Cathedral See Dean Paulo António Dias da Conceição, chose two Goans, Bernardo Peres da Silva and Constancio Roque da Costa and a Portuguese, António José de Lima Leitão, as Goa's representatives in the Cortes but by the time they reached Portugal absolutism had been restored and they could not take their seats. Peres da Silva met with the same fate when re-elected in 1827. And when as a reward for his steadfast adherence to the Liberal ideas and firm support to the cause of Dona Maria, he came to Goa as Prefect (Governor with wider powers), he was allowed by the reactionaries to assume

charge, but was deposed within seventeen days, as a result of which in the fight between the Liberals and the Absolutists, gruesome massacres were perpetrated by the troops opposed to him in Gaspar Dias, Tiracol and Gululem.

In 1844, the ex-Benedictine Jose Maria da Silva Torres was sent to Goa by Gregory XVI with the Bull "Divina disponente clemencia", appointing him Archbishop, and the Brief "Cum propter", restricting his jurisdiction to the Goa territory. He, however, made public the Bull but suppressing the Brief, declared excommunicated Propaganda Fide's Vicars Apostolic, administered the sacraments of confirmation and ordination in Bombay and Salsette and ordained without proper training about 600 priests in Goa to send them to different missions outside the territory, with the result that he was admonished by the Holy Father in 1845 and eventually recalled three years later, the Archdiocese again remaining vacant for another period of thirteen years, till 1862.

In the meantime, in 1852, when on his way back home, the Macau Bishop Jeronimo Jose da Mata, on instructions from Lisbon, stopped in Colombo and Bombay in order to exercise his episcopal authority, being supported by four Native priests, the Goans Mariano Antonio Soares, Gabriel da Silva, Joseph de Mello, and the East Indian, Braz Fernandes, the Bishop was pulled up by the Holy See and the four priests were placed under suspension and excommunication, if they did not recant, the Bishop and the four priests being, however, proclaimed "*benemeritos da Patria*" (to have deserved well of the Nation) by the Portuguese Parliament, which gave rise to the so-called Goan schism.

It was in this climate of strife, both as far as the State and the Church were concerned, that



Fr. Alvares was born and lived the years of his childhood and adolescence till 1859, the year he completed the Philosophy and Theology course at the Rachol Seminary and found himself in a helpless situation without a Prelate in Goa to ordain him, which forced him to go to Bombay for the purpose. How far these happenings, in some of which priests had played a leading role, influenced his thinking and helped shape his life and career will be our task to see in the following chapters, while rendering an account of his long and eventful life.

## BIRTH, CHILDHOOD AND ADOLESCENCE

Fr. Alvares was born in the village of Verna, the Varunapur of yore, famous for the Hindu temple of Varuna, the Lord of the Sea, in the then *concelho*, now taluka, of Salcete, of the so-called "Old Conquests" of Goa, in the 250/300-year old ancestral house of the Alvares, a small portion of which, perhaps one third of the original building, is still standing. The Alvares were *ganv-kars* of the Verna *comunidade*, Pais or Naiks, converted to Christianity towards the end of the XVI century. His parents were José Batista Alvares and Marinha Expectação Lourenço, whose name also appears spelt as Marianinha.<sup>2</sup> He was born, not on 3rd May 1837, as stated by some of his biographers (Fr. Casmiro Cristóvão de Nazaré, Aleixo Manuel de Costa, for instance), but on 29th April 1836, as can be seen from his birth certificate. He was baptized in the Holy Cross church of his village on 6th May receiving the name of António Francisco Xavier Alvares, but more often than not he would sign only as A. Francisco Xavier Alvares and was known among the family members by the pet name of Fanchu.

Although education at all levels, till then in the hands of religious congregations, was secularized by the Marquis of Pombal, the all-powerful Prime Minister of King Dom José, in 1772, when official primary schools were started, in Goa, where parochial schools had been in existence since their creation by Viceroy Dom João de Castro on orders from King Dom João III in 1547, Government primary schools did not come into being before 1872. The young Francisco must, therefore, have learnt the three R's in the school of the parish church of Verna, which ought to be in existence, if not earlier, at least since the church was rebuilt for the second time, in its present form, in 1602.



As for his secondary education, we know that there was in the neighbouring village of Loutulim a private school started by Fr. Miguel Filipe de Quadros in 1840 and known as St. Michael School and another school of Latin and Philosophy in the *concelho* headquarters of Margao, set up by Fr. António João de Miranda, the wellknown founder of the *Hospício do Sagrado Coração de Maria*, in 1848. But we do not know if young Francisco joined any of these two private schools for his secondary education, or went straightaway to the Rachol Seminary for the so-called *Estudos Preparatórios*, which then included Latin and Portuguese (2 years), French and English (one year), Rhetoric, Arithmetic, elements of Natural Sciences and World History (2 years).

What we know for certain, as far as Fr. Alvares' entire formal education is concerned, is that he completed the Rachol Seminary's Philosophy and Theology courses in 1859 at the age of 23. But as bad luck would have it, the Goa Archdiocese was remaining vacant since the recall of Silva Torres in 1849. This was for the second time in fifty years, as earlier, on the death of S. Galdino in 1831, the Goa See had also remained without an Archbishop for a period of thirteen long years, and no one knew how long this new vacancy would last. This must have been a frustrating experience for young Francisco as eager as he was to become a priest and begin his work in the Vineyard of the Lord, where "the harvest was so abundant but the workers so few."

Born in 1836, less than half a century after the Pintos' Revolt and just one year after the deposition of Peres da Silva, at a time when memories of the savage sentences against the 1787 "conspirators", the bitter fights between the Liberals and the Absolutists and the appalling butcheries of Gaspar Dias, Tiracol and Gululem were still fresh in the minds of the people of Goa, the

young Seminary student could not have failed to learn from the elders a lot about these events, in which priests had played a leading part. On the other hand, the Padroado-Propaganda controversy, due to which Goa was now without a prelate, who could ordain him, must have also pained him much. Anyway, a product of the Rachol Seminary, which had remained a focus of reaction even long after Enlightenment had come to Goa with such learned luminaries of the Church as Bishop Mateus de Castro (Mahale) and later Fr. Gonçalves and Fr. Couto of Pintos' Revolt fame, to mention only these, from among so many who had been to Europe. Fr. Alvares, as shown by his early writings, was a convinced anti-Liberal and staunch Padroadista. In fact, it was only much later, when he came to grips with the hard realities of the political and religious life in Goa under such autocrats as Governors Vasco Guedes de Carvalho e Meneses (1889-91), Rafael Jacome Lopes de Andrade (1893-94) or Elesbão José de Betencourt Lapa, Viscount of Vila Nova de Ourem (1894-95), and Archbishop, later Patriarch, Dom António Sebastião Valente (1882-1908), that his ideas began to change making of him a true revolutionary in outlook and behaviour, although he was a born fighter, in the beginning fighting for the wrong causes.<sup>3</sup>

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## STAY IN BOMBAY.

(1859-1867)

It was soon after completing the Seminary course that young Francisco left for Bombay. How deep and lasting was the impression that this city of the then "British India" made in his juvenile mind can be gauged from the reference to the "glory" of *Urbs prima in Indiis*, in his lecture on the situation in Goa, delivered at the hall of the Municipal Corporation in Panjim on 27th August 1886. Bombay, ceded to the British as part of the dowry of Princess Dona Catarina de Braganza, daughter of King Dom João IV, when she married King Charles II of England in 1661, had by then already become, not only a great commercial metropolis but also an important centre of learning with many educational institutions, most of them private, both Catholic and Protestant, such as the St. Mary's Institution, the Bombay Educational Society School, the Robert Morey School, and others.

Fr. Alvares' Goan biographers, writing in Portuguese, beginning with J.V. Barreto Miranda, tell us that young Francisco joined in Bombay um *colégio de jesuitas*, which has been translated into English as a Jesuit "college". But *colégio* in Portuguese only means a boarding school of any level, not necessarily a higher education institute, as the word "college" means in English. Moreover, we know that the Jesuits' St. Xavier's College was founded only in 1869, long after Fr. Alvares had returned to Goa. But the Jesuits, after having encouraged a Goan educationist, B.X. Furtado, a teacher in the Robert Morey School, to start a high school at Cavel in 1850 as a *bal-lon d'essai* to test the viability of such an undertaking, had founded their own St. Mary's Institution with Bishop Anastasius Hartmann's blessings at Mazagon in 1856. It must, therefore, be

this boarding secondary school that the ex-Rachol seminarian joined on having gone to Bombay.

It is a matter of conjecture why our Francisco preferred this Jesuit school to several other similar institutions, like the António de Sousa's High School attached to the Gloria Church in existence since 1795, or Furtado's St. Francis Xavier's Boys School or St. Michael's High School at Mahim, all older than St. Mary's Institution. Was it because it was then the only Government-recognized school or because the then Vicar Apostolic in Bombay was a Jesuit, Dr. Hartmann, from whom he was to receive the sacrament of ordination in the absence of a Prelate in Goa? Anyway, Bombay was then the main battlefield in the bitter fighting between the Padroado and the Propaganda and one should not forget that it was on a complaint from Dr. Hartmann that Pope Pius IX had pulled up the Macau Bishop Mata for having exercised his episcopal authority in Bombay in 1853 on his return journey to Portugal.

As we know that, after ordination, in 1862, Fr. Alvares stayed on for another five years in Bombay, without, however, pursuing higher studies in English, it must be presumed that he started working as a priest, in a subordinate capacity, preferably, in any of the several churches under Padroado, like the St. Francis Xavier's church at Dabul, the Gloria church at Mazagon, the Salvação church at Dadar, the St. Michael church at Mahim, or the Saúde Church at Cavel. Wherever he might have served as a priest, it was this stay in Bombay, after his studies in a high school, that gave him proficiency in the English language, which was to prove an asset to him as a journalist and a writer, first when he maintained an English section in both his Portuguese periodicals, "A Cruz" and "A Verdade", and then when he ran an English weekly under the title of "The Times of Goa", as well as when he pub-



lished an English version of his booklet on "*Di-recções para o Tratamento do Chólera*" and his polemical pamphlet on "Antioch and Rome", written directly in English.

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## PUBLIC LIFE IN GOA (1867-1887)

Whatever he might have done after ordination in Bombay, it is with his return to Goa that Fr. Alvares' public life may be said to have truly begun. From 1867 to 1887, these two full decades represent the longest and most active period in the story of his life as told in this book. From the age of 31 to that of 51, it was the time when he was in the prime of life and during which he made a mark, first as a pious and devout priest and an apostle of charity, then as an educator and promoter of education and finally as a militant journalist and an alert political activist, remaining all along a dedicated and selfless social worker.

On his return to Goa, Fr. Alvares settled down in Panjim, then officially known as Nova-Goa, the capital of the so-called *Estado da Índia*, which perhaps he thought would be a wider field for his activities than his home village of Verna or even Margao, the headquarters of the *Salcete concelho*, which had earned the name of "Goan Athens" and already was the scene of the fecund apostleship of Fr. António João de Miranda, the well-known founder of the *Hospício do Sagrado Coração de Maria*, a charitable institution running a hospital, which is still there, and who had earlier also founded a secondary school, which proved shortlived. In a way, Fr. Miranda may be said to have become a living example for the young Bombay-retained priest, save in his journalistic and political activities.

In Panjim Fr. Alvares took on rent a modest house not far from the St. Sebastian chapel in *Fountainhas* (Maia), then the most thickly populated ward and the original nucleus of the nascent city. In fact, although already raised to the status of



city by a Charter of Queen Dona Maria II in 1843 during the administration of the Count of Antas, Francisco Xavier da Silva Pereira, Panjim, a mere ward of the village of Taleigao, was undergoing a slow process of urban development and was still a long way from what it is today. Fontainhas, which had developed along the Vila Nova de Ourem Road, opened by the Viscount after whom it had been named, José Joaquim Januário Lapa (1851-1855), was completely separated from central part of the city by the hill known as *Alto da Conceição*, which was cut only much later at the initiative of ViceAdmiral Caetano Alexandre de Almeida e Albuquerque (1878-1882) so as to establish a direct communication through the so-called *Corte do Oiteiro* Road between the eastern and western wards of the city.

Besides the lack of easy communications within the city itself at a time when the only means of conveyance were *machilas* (a kind of sedans with two seats opposing each other) and horse-driven cars, the existence of swamps in several parts made Panjim quite insalubrious, being, therefore, in the grip of endemic fevers like malaria and typhoid, both at the time not yet properly identified, and being also frequently visited by deadly epidemics such as cholera and plague, either bubonic or pneumonic, not to mention other less fatal epidemic diseases like small-pox, diphtheria, cerebrospinal meningitis, etc. It was this, as we shall see in due course, that provided a vast field for social work to Fr. Alvares.

Once settled in Panjim, Fr. Alvares' activity in the first five years or so was confined to the priestly ministry and the apostleship of charity, "with general edification", in the apt words of Fr. Casimiro Cristóvão de Nazaré (1830-1928), the noted Church historian, almost his contemporary and a neighbour. In 1871, Fr. Alvares started

along with Frs. Manuel Agostinho de Carvalho, Caetano Xavier de Abreu and Joaquim Santana Coelho and two more priests, a charitable association, *Associação de Caridade de Pangim*, which was inaugurated on 13th Sept. This association would render all possible help to the poor, beginning with the wandering beggars, with the result that the city soon got rid of this curse. Fr. Alvares' example fructified, and associations of this kind soon sprang up in his home village of Verna, in Ribandar, Santa Cruz, Mapusa, Revora, Colva, S. Tome (Cansaulim), Carmona in the so-called Old Conquests and even in far-off Quepem in the New Conquests.

Fr. Alvares' next field of activity during his sojourn in Panjim was education. In 1877 he set up a secondary school under the name of *Colégio dos Sagrados Corações de Jesus e Maria*, with six eminent teachers, all priests, among whom were Fr. Lourenco de Figueiredo of Loutulim (Philosophy), Fr. Ricardo Filomeno da Costa of Siolim (Latin) and Fr. Lapa of Salsete (Portuguese and French), and with resident and non-resident students, strict discipline being maintained among them by himself as director. This *Colégio*, inaugurated on 23rd July with the blessings of Archbishop Dom Aires Ornelas e Vasconcellos, a patron of education, who even granted a subsidy of Rs. 30 per month, however, did not last long, not only because teachers and students began deserting it on falling a prey to the prevailing endemic diseases, but also because Fr. Alvares himself, having just taken over the editorship of "A Cruz", the weekly started by Fr. M.A. de Carvalho, when he was struck with pulmonary tuberculosis, showed a greater interest in this new activity and neglected the affairs of the school.

In 1878 a deadly cholera epidemic broke out, taking a heavy toll particularly among the poor people, and this was the occasion for Fr. Alvares



to show his fine mettle as a social worker. For all the duration of the epidemic, he was seen, tirelessly and unmindful of the danger to his own life, coming to the rescue of those afflicted with the dreaded disease in all possible ways, looking after them in their homes or taking the homeless ones to his own house or to the hospital for shelter or better medical aid, at times even carrying them on his own shoulders when dead for burial. It was with the experience he gained while treating the choleric cases that, on the occasion of the next outbreak of the epidemic in 1885, he published a booklet on "Directions for Treatment of Cholera" in Portuguese, which he translated into English for publication in Colombo at the time of a similar visitation in that island some eleven years later.

With the school closed and the charitable association having suffered a setback with the untimely death of Fr. Carvalho, his right hand man and in that venture, Fr. Alvares now concentrated on his journalistic activity exposing fearlessly, week after week, the excesses as well as the shortcomings of the Portuguese administration. The Governor was then Carlos Eugenio Correia da Silva, Viscount of Paço de Arcos (1882-1886) and the Archbishop Ornelas e Vasconcelos (1875-1879), and Fr. Alvares, in his journalistic mission, had no trouble with either. But things changed with the coming of the new Prelate in the person of Dom António Sebastião Valente (1882-1902), a man with an authoritarian turn of mind, as acknowledged by the then Overseas Minister, Julio de Vilhena, who had chosen him for the post. He arrived in Goa on 5th May 1882 and, within a little over two and half months, by a pastoral decree dated 26th July and published in the *Boletim Oficial* banned "A Cruz" as "systematically hostile to the ecclesiastical authorities, defamatory, scandalous, revolutionary and disturber of peace of consciences", forbidding the editor from

"publishing it and the faithful from reading it."

This was indeed a flagrant case of violation of the Freedom of the Press in the history of Goa, which is worth mentioning in some detail. It has been claimed on behalf of Valente that, while greeting him on his arrival, "A Cruz" had the audacity of drawing guidelines for the governance of the Archdiocese, also showing disrespect to the Pontiff and the King and adding that the editor did not fear excommunication or any other punishment. It is further claimed that before taking this drastic step the Archbishop had admonished the Editor, who had also been earlier censored by Ornelas.

This tall claim, however, is not supported by the historical evidence available. And the very fact that, when Fr. Alvares appealed to the Crown, the Goa High Court gave a ruling asking the Archbishop to lift the prohibition under pain of loss of temporalities, goes to prove that the prohibitory order was an abuse of power. But Valente was not a man to accept what he regarded as a challenge to his spiritual authority in a matter which, in his opinion, was outside the sphere of the secular power, and complained to the Overseas Minister in Lisbon and was asked by him to file an appeal to the Supreme Court, which, however, refused to take cognizance of the revision petition. The net result of the whole sordid episode was that "A Cruz" lost its readers because of the Archbishop's order and died a natural death, forcing Fr. Alvares to start another weekly, "A Verdade", in which he carried on his fight for what he deemed to be the truth (that was the meaning of the word *verdade*) in that new periodical as well as in two others, "O Progresso de Goa" and "The Goa Times". In the meantime, however, on the return to Portugal of Paço de Arcos in 1885, Valente had become chairman of the governing council to remain so till April 1886.



Harrassed by the Archbishop, now functioning also as Acting Governor and wielding both powers, ecclesiastical and civil, Fr. Alvares finally decided to quit Goa. And this brings to a close this period of his life which had a turbulent end.

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## ON JOINING THE SYRIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

(1887-1894)

Was it pure, unmixed emotion, as a result of the conflict with Archbishop Valente, that prompted Fr. Alvares to take what C.C. de Nazaré describes as the "foolish decision" (*cerebrina resolução*) of exchanging the Roman Catholic Church, in which he was born and had lived for 50 years, for the Syrian Orthodox Church, regarded by his own Church as heretic? Or was there at least a semblance of reason for taking such a step, which he knew would make him anathema to his own family, relatives and friends and even the people of Goa at large? Fr. Alvares could not possibly know, when he joined the Syrian Orthodox Church, all the facts he would later marshal in favour of it in relation to the Roman Catholic Church in the two polemical pamphlets, "The Universal Supremacy in the Church of Christ" and "Antioch and Rome", he published in Colombo in 1889. But the very fact of their publication goes to show that conviction, now replacing emotion, had become so strong that he could resist all attempts made by his old friends, even while on his death bed in the Misericordia hospital at Ribandar, to bring him back into the fold of the Roman Catholic Church.

According to Nazaré, it was in Colombo that Fr. Alvares met Mar Dionysius, then the Metropolitan of Malabar, and so profoundly impressed him by his insinuating personality that he created a new post, that of a Metropolitan of Goa, India, excluding Kerala, and Ceylon, to raise him to episcopal status. As per a document in Syriac published by that Church historian, translated into Portuguese, Fr. Alvares' consecration as a



bishop took place in the Syrian Christian Seminary of Kottayam on 29th July 1889, the three consecrating bishops being Paulus Mar Anastasius, Paulus Mar Ivanios and George Mar Gregory, all bishops of Malabar, owing allegiance to His Holiness Moran Mar Ignatius Peter III, Patriarch of the Apostolic See of Antioch, by whose decree he was made a bishop.

We know very little about the missionary and pastoral activity of Fr. Alvares, now Mar Julius I, in the area of his jurisdiction, particularly in North and South Canara, then part, respectively, of the Bombay and Madras Presidencies and now forming together the State of Karnataka, and in Sri Lanka, then known as Ceylon. It is claimed that about five thousand people joined the Syrian Orthodox Church along the west coast of India, from Bombay to Mangalore, through the apostolic labours of Fr. Alvares, helped by another Roman Catholic priest from Goa, Fr. Roque Zeferino de Noronha (1847-1936), who had also joined the Syrian Orthodox Church at the age of 43 in the very same year Fr. Alvares was made a bishop and perhaps after having fallen under the spell of his magnetic personality. Whether the now flourishing Brahmawar mission was set up by Fr. Alvares or not is a moot point, but the very fact that, soon after his death, Syrian Orthodox Christians from Brahmawar and Colombo wanted to take his mortal remains from the Santa Ines cemetery to enshrine them in their own churches may be regarded as an argument in favour of Fr. Alvares' connection with those two mission centres of the Syrian Orthodox Church, particularly Brahmawar, where Fr. Noronha died and was buried.

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## THE MOST CALAMITOUS PERIOD

(1894-1895)

The next period, comprising only two years, is the shortest in this biography, but the most calamitous, and by the way also the best documented, of Fr. Alvares entire life, because of a conjugation of circumstances, in an ample measure beyond his control, first the Maratha Sepoy Mutiny and then the Dada Rane Revolt. The cumulative effect of these two almost simultaneous rebellions was that they so unnerved the Portuguese authorities that they came to view many leaders of public opinion in Goa as anti-European and to believe in the existence of a third threat to their presence in Goa, which went down in our history as the Sedition or Nativist Revolt. Having returned to Goa an year earlier, Fr. Alvares found himself caught into the vortex of this otherwise non-existent political movement, not only on account of his past record as a journalist highly critical of the Portuguese administration, but because he was presently the editor or rather the main writer of a new periodical, *O Brado Indiano* (The Indian Outcry), unsparing in his criticism of both the Governor, Viscount of Vila Nova de Ourem, Elesbao Jose de Bettencourt Lapa, and his *menino bonito* (blue-eyed boy), Captain Manuel de Oliveira Gomes da Costa, his A.D.C., also holding the post of *Administrador do Concelho das Ilhas*

This is not the proper place to render a detailed account of these three separate political events, which were really unconnected with one another but which, by force of circumstances, got so intimately intertwined that this period was also one of the most tragic in our history. In fact, as at the time of the overthrow, as Prefect, of Bernardo Peres da Silva, in the struggle between Liberals and Absolutists, this was another period



during which a reign of terror was let loose by the Portuguese authorities, as a result of which, besides Fr. Alvares, many other Goan leaders, as, for instance, the Viscount of Bardez, Inacio Caetano de Carvalho, suffered all kinds of indignities at the hands of their European masters, not a few being forced to seek refuge outside the territory in the then British India, because of the prevailing state of insecurity.

As is well known to students of the history of Goa, in the night of 14th September, 1895, a company of Maratha sepoys in the service of the Portuguese, having been ordered, on instructions from the Overseas Minister in Lisbon, to proceed to Mozambique, where a revolt had broken out among the Landim troops, without any assurances as to their daily wages, period of stay, etc. mutineered and, leaving their barracks in Panjim, marched to the Nanuz fort, where they camped. Availing themselves of this time of trouble for the Portuguese, the Ranes, who had been a thorn on their side for long, also revolted at the same time, along with the discontented *ryots* of Satari, under the leadership of Dada Rane, resorting as on earlier occasions to guerrilla warfare and indulging in plunder, arson, kidnapping, etc. The situation in fact became so explosive that a military expedition had to come from Portugal under the command of no less a person than a member of the royal family, Prince Dom Afonso, son of the reigning monarch, Dom Luis.

Of course, Fr. Alvares had nothing to do with either of these two revolts, but pleading in his periodical the cause of the Maratha Sepoys, forced to fight outside the Goa territory without any guarantees as well as that of the Ranes, actually fighting not against Portuguese sovereignty but for their manorial rights, he naturally soon became suspect in the eyes of the authorities, who could easily implicate him if they so desi-

red. But the immediate provocation for the action taken against him by Gomes da Costa was an article in the issue of *O Brado Indiano*, dated 27th July 1895, under the title of *Enigma para advinhação* (A riddle for guessing) and the subtitle "*Diga quem é o indivíduo*" (say who the individual is), in which, in an oblique reference, a series of offences by an army officer were listed while he was in service in Coimbra, Figueira da Foz, Ericeira, Lisboa, etc.

Gomes da Costa's reaction to this was twofold; he wrote a letter to the Editor, Bernardo da Silva, demanding that a clear and express declaration be published in the next issue of the weekly as to whether the reference was to his person, and an application to the *comarca* judge summoning Silva to the same effect, under sect. 15 of the 17-5-1867 Law, published in the *Boletim Oficial* no. 90 of the next year. Fr. Alvares' answer in the next issue was that the captain was the only person of all who though it fit to demand such a formal declaration and that, therefore, he was perhaps in a position to throw some light on the matter. In the reply to the Court it was pointed out that this was really a riddle which still remained unsolved and that, therefore, until a solution came, it could not be said to refer to any person and, much less, to that army officer.

As the matter ended there in the Court, Capt. Gomes da Costa thought it convenient to teach Fr. Alvares a lesson on his own. So in the evening of 19th August, at about 7 p.m., when Fr. Alvares was returning in a horse-driven car from Santa Cruz, on reaching the Phoenix fountain, had him arrested by a posse of policemen posted there for the purpose, stripped of his episcopal vestments and taken only with his underwear to the Police lock-up, where he was put in a filthy room without a chair, table or bed and the floor smelling of urine and faeces. On the way, the police-



men also wanted to remove Fr. Alvares' pectoral cross and the ring, to which he offered stiff resistance, saying that they could do so only after he was dead. However, the violence used against him was such that he was also forcibly deprived of these two episcopal insignia.

A case being registered against Fr. Alvares for offences against the religion of the Kingdom (Portugal), apostasy and public renunciation of the same and undue wearing of prelatical vestments under sect. 130 and 135 of the (Portuguese) Penal Code, Fr. Alvares was, however, honourably acquitted by the Judge, Diogo Gomes de Meneses, an European, as documentary evidence was produced that he was a Bishop of the Syrian Church and, therefore, entitled to episcopal garments, and that the Police had failed to substantiate the allegations made.

Disappointed with the result of his vindictive action, Capt. Gomes da Costa had Fr. Alvares re-arrested two days later, on 21st, and this time the Police registered against him a case for high treason and threat to the security of the State both internally and externally under sections 170 and 171 of the same Code. But this time too, the tables were turned against the revengeful army officer, although he could count on the support of the *Delegado do Procurador da República* (Public Prosecutor) Jaime Pinto. In fact, when the Judge bailed out Fr. Alvares accepting a security of Rs. 5,000 offered by a leading lawyer, Francisco Xavier Sales de Andrade, the Public Prosecutor took strong objection on the ground that the offence was unbailable. Jaime Pinto went in appeal to the *Relação* (High Court), but here the *Desembargadores* (Justices) Duarte de Vasconcelos, Alberto Pinto and A. Supico, in their ruling, upheld the decision of the lower court judge. And, when the case was heard, Judge Gomes again acquitted the *accu* (accused), observing in his judgement, with

a high sense of humour, that "rebellion or high treason was a thing in the air and his olfaction could not perceive or apprehend, which was not at all surprising as he, unfortunately, suffered from a chronic coryza". Moreover, the three denunciations were anonymous, and in the copies of the issues of "O Brado Indiano" as well 30 *linguados* (strips of paper) seized in a search of the weekly's printing press, no subversive sentences could be found, the Judge observed.<sup>4</sup>

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## IN CANARA AND SRI LANKA AGAIN

(1896-1912)

Fr. Alvares left Goa for the third time most probably towards the end of 1895 because of a real threat to his life in the reign of terror unleashed by the ex-Governor Rafael Jacome Lopes de Andrade (1893-1894), when, taking once again the reins of government on 14th November of that year to remain in power till 3rd March of the next year, he took the draconian measures of establishing a War Council, which filled the jails with all those suspect of being involved in the Ranes Revolt or the so-called Sedition, formed a *ronda volante* (flying squad) to hunt for those still at large, dismissed the *Junta de Saude* (Health Inspection Board), constituted by three eminent Goan doctors, to be replaced by a *Hospital de Sangue* (Blood Hospital) on the ground floor of his own palace in Panjim and banned the Press, suspending all papers published in Goa and forbidding the entry of those printed by Goans in Bombay. During this period, apart from his pastoral work in Brahmawar, a Padroado parish which, thanks to him and to Fr. Noronha, was now a thriving mission centre of the Syrian Orthodox Church, we know only of two incidents, one of which almost got him into trouble with the then Malankara Metropolitan, Mar Gevarghese Dionysius, while the other raised him in the estimation of the whole Syrian Orthodox Church community of Malabar. The trouble started when Fr. Alvares, now Mar Julius, decided, without the Metropolitan's consent, to elevate to episcopal dignity one who has been described as the "notorious ex-Roman Catholic priest" Rene Vilatte, in 1896. But, when the Antiochan Patriarch, on the occasion of his visit to Malabar in 1909, summoned a Synod in the old Kottayam Seminary and, claiming full authority over the Syrian Orthodox Christians of

Malabar, excommunicated Mar Gevarghese Dionysius in order to put in his place one Mar Athanasius, this unlawful action of the Patriarch caused resentment in the entire community and Mar Julius courageously took the lead in the condemnation of this abuse of power on the part of Abdullah II.

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## LAST YEARS, DEATH AND FUNERAL (1912-1923)

The last period in this account of the long and eventful life of Fr. Alvares covers the eleven years he spent in Panjim, once again, till his death. A Republic had been proclaimed in Portugal on 5th October 1910 and the Law of Separation of the Church and the State promulgated the next year, whereby Roman Catholicism ceased to be the State religion, all citizens now enjoying equal rights, irrespective of their creeds or religious convictions. Fr. Alvares, who had once been arraigned in a court of Law for "offences against the religion of the Kingdom", therefore, thought he would be quite safe now in Goa and, already in his mid-70's and in indifferent health, decided to return to his native land, so that he need not say, like the celebrated exiled Roman general Scipio the African, *ingrata patria, non possidebis ossa mea*, (ungrateful mother country, thou shalt not possess my bones).

But by now he was not, physically, the same strong man of yester years though the flame of patriotism, dedication to the public causes and love of the poor was burning in his heart as brightly as before. But presently he had no means of subsistence and, if before he was collecting donations from rich and charitable-minded people to help the poor and especially the beggars he could not bear to see roaming in the streets, now he was forced to beg from door to door to support himself and the poor he had taken under his care. In fact, his house in Fontainhas had become a heaven for the poor, including some *bhangis*, not a few of whom actually lived with him, long before Mahatma Gandhi chose to live in a harijan colony in Delhi.

It speaks volumes for his spirit of social ser-

vice that at the age of almost 80, he wrote and published a booklet on manioc (*Manihot utilisima*) a native plant of West Indies, now widely cultivated in Kerala, particularly in Cochin and Travancore, and from the roots of which a nutritious starch could be extracted. For a number of years Fr. Alvares championed the cause of cultivation of manioc as the best means to overcome the crises of food shortage Goa was then going through. After a first edition of the booklet running into 20 pages in 1916, he brought out an enlarged second edition with almost double the number of pages, giving all relevant details about the choice of soils, digging of the ground for plantation, use of fertilizers, appropriate time for sowing, yield per acre, etc. etc.

Fr. Alvares fell sick with dysentery in early September 1923 and, with no one to look after him in the house in which he lived with an old and poor woman, who cooked for him his daily rice and curry, was taken to the Ribandar hospital run by the *Santa Casa da Misericordia*, (the Holy House of Mercy), a typical Portuguese charitable institution, which had been in existence since Afonso de Albuquerque's times, where he was admitted as an indigent. Here, after putting up a stiff fight against death for almost two weeks, he breathed his last in the morning of 23rd. It is said that, while on his death bed, several high dignitaries of the Roman Catholic Church visited him in an attempt at reconciliation with the faith he had abjured, but, lucid till the last moment, he resisted all their efforts.

No sooner the news of his death reached Panjim, than a Citizens' Committee, chaired by the Chief Justice, António de Noronha, was formed to make arrangements for his funeral. After lying in state in the hall of the Municipal Corporation for a full day to enable people to pay him their last



homage, the funeral procession left wending its way through the Conde de Torres Novas Road, Afonso de Albuquerque Road, Vasco Da Gama Road, Republic Avenue and the bridge to Santa Ines cemetery. It is on record that the Governor General, Jaime Alberto de Castro Morais, sent a representative at the funeral, which was directed by the *Procurador da República* (Attorney General), Taumaturgo Pereira, assisted by the Editor of *Diário da Noite*, Luis de Menezes. Four funeral orations were delivered by the Director of Agriculture, Cesar Correia Mendes, Lyceum Professor Araujo Mascarenhas, Casimiro de Sequeira Nazaré on behalf of the people of Fontainhas, and Cordato de Noronha, as a representative of the youth.

Four years later, a huge cement concrete cross was put up over his grave with his bones collected and kept in a lead box at the Santa Ines cemetery as a last tribute of his fellow citizens, J.J.da Cunha delivering a speech and Caetano Gracias publishing a booklet with Fr.Alvares biographical notes on the occasion. And then, for decades, overgrown with vegetation, the grave of this great man, an ardent Patriot and a true Saint, lay neglected and ignored practically from all, until it was, so to say, discovered by His Grace Mathews Mar Athanasius, then Metropolitan of dioceses outside Kerala and now His Holiness Besilius Mar Thoma Mathews I, on the occasion of his visit to Goa in 1967, when a decision was taken to remove, with the Municipality's permission, the mortal remains of Fr. Alvares to have them enshrined in St. Mary's church in Ribandar as well as in the Church of the mission centre of Brahmawar, which was actually done a few years later.

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## THE PIOUS PRIEST, THE PHILANTHROPIST, THE EDUCATOR, THE SOCIAL WORKER

Enough has been said, incidentally, in some of the preceding chapters with a bearing on the subject of the present one, so very little needs to be added now about Fr. Alvares' piety, philanthropy, espousal of the cause of education and spirit of social service. To begin with, it is a tribute to his deep religious spirit and sound moral education that he remained a very pious man of God, first as a priest and then as a bishop, throughout his stormy life even on the face of grave provocations. The spirit of social service also never deserted him, even in the midst of his hectic journalistic and political activities, particularly on the occasion of epidemics or any natural calamities, such as the landslide while the hill *Alto da Conceição* was being cut to establish a direct communication between the eastern and western parts of the city. Finally, the fact that his *Associação de Caridade de Panjim* and the *Colégio dos S. S. Corações de Jesus e Maria* as well as the English school he started after he returned definitely to Goa in 1912 did not last long do not detract from the merit of such initiatives or his intrinsic qualities as a philanthropist or an educator.

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## THE JOURNALIST, THE WRITER, THE ORATOR

Of the famous Portuguese journalist Francisco Manuel Homem Cristo, later better known as Homem Cristo Pai, as his son, also a journalist, became known as Homem Cristo Filho, it was said that "irreverent before man, he was a timid before grammar", for while he would not mince words in his criticism of even the highest men of his time, he was ever careful not to offend grammatical rules. Well, the same could not be said of Fr. Alvares as a journalist, for, unsparing in his criticism of Governors, Archbishops or other men in authority, he would show an equal lack of respect for the correction of language or grammatical norms.

This was perhaps not very surprising at a time when Portuguese was not widely spoken in Goan homes and very few Goans had mastered that language to the extent of speaking or writing it hundred percent correctly. Moreover, having learnt Portuguese in the Rachol Seminary and being quite familiar with such great preachers as Antonio Vieira (1608-1697), Manuel Bernardes (1644-1710) and others, whom he often quoted, it is obvious that he was greatly influenced by the Portuguese Writing of the Baroque age to which those preachers belonged. This explains perhaps the main characteristics of his style, rambling, digressive, prolix, with many asides or interpolations, at times entirely out of context, the whole sounding affected and pretentious. But worse still was that he made very often glaring grammatical mistakes. As Luis de Menezes, the editor of *Diario da Noite*, the Panjim evening paper, rightly noted in a tribute on the occasion of his death, "if he (Fr. Alvares) was not proficient (as a writer), he was fearless (as a journalist)"

Besides his many articles in different periodicals, "A Cruz", "A Verdade", "O Progresso de Goa" and "O Brado Indiano" in Portuguese and "The Times of Goa" in English Fr. Alvares left us at least six published works, the two already mentioned pamphlets, *A Supremacia Universal na Igreja de Christo, provada pela Escripura, Tradição e Escriptores Insuspeitos a Igreja Romana* (The Universal Supremacy of the Church of Christ proved by the Scriptures, Tradition and Writers: not suspicious to the Roman church) in Portuguese and "Antioch and Rome" in English, both of a polemical nature in which he argues the case of Christian Church's supremacy in the world and puts forth Antioch's claim as against Rome's, *Prelecção sobre a Situação Actual no Interior e Exterior do Pais* (Lecture on the present situation in the Country, internally and externally) and *Discurso acerca da questão do Padroado* (Speech about the question of Padroado), both on two burning topics of the day, the Anglo-Portuguese Treaty and the Marmugao Harbour and Railway Agreement, ruinous for Goa, and the scandalous Padroado controversy, and two small booklets of a didactic nature, *Direcções para o tratamento do cholera* (Directions for treatment of cholera), published first in Portuguese and then in an abridged version in English, and *Mandioca* (Manioc) on the cultivation of this plant - all with the same stylistic defects.

But if the writer in Fr. Alvares left much to be desired, the same could not be said of him as a speaker, when words came welling up from his mouth without giving him time to shape them one way or the other or to embellish them. In his *Prelecção* Fr. Alvares makes a pointed reference to the spoken word as against the written word and regrets that in Goa, unlike in Bombay, the spoken word is almost confined to the pulpit, seldom being heard on the public platform. Those who had the occasion to hear him know that he was, indeed, more than a good preacher, a powerful ora-



tor, capable of swaying his audience, particularly when speaking on a subject dear to his heart. As Fr. Casimiro Cristovao de Nazare puts it, "when it was the case of pleading the cause of the less fortunate ones, his warm words would electrify the hearts of listeners and their hands would open bountifully."

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## THE REVOLUTIONARY AND THE POLITICAL ACTIVIST

Fr. Alvares was a revolutionary, not only in the political, but also in every other sense of the word. He was a social reformer, or revolutionary, who wanted Goans to change their food habits, giving up rice in favour of more nutritious food (and in this respect his campaign for a large-scale cultivation of manioc must be remembered), to shun foreign fashions and extravagant expenditure with wines and imported food stuff on such occasions as weddings, *tornabodas* and the like. He was also against false devotionism or religious exhibitionism as well as wasteful spending at the time especially of the feast of the Patron Saint in the village church, with unnecessary decorations, music bands, fire-works, etc.

Fr. Alvares was always a keen and alert observer of the political scene, ever ready to take the lead in any political movement, when the occasion demanded. The instrument he used, whenever the need arose, was his pen, which in his case proved mightier than the sword. He was also ever ready to use the public platform in the so-called *comícios* (public meetings) which had become a regular feature of our political life, as could be seen from both his *Preleccao* and *Discurso*, referred to in the preceding chapter.

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## THE PATRIOT AND THE SAINT

The title of this chapter, which is also the title of the book, may sound rather strange not only to many narrow-minded Goans still with a pre-Vatican II mentality, but also to many others already attuned to the spirit of the ecumenical movement. A patriot, they would say, we all knew he was. But a Saint? - many may question, as Catholics do not accept even Fr. Joseph Vaz or Fr. Agnelo as Saints, before the Roman Catholic church proclaims them as such. But if Catholics in Goa already believe in miracles wrought by both of them, the Syrian Orthodox Christians, particularly in Goa and in Brahmawar, also believe that Fr. Alvares, or Mar Julius, as they prefer to call him, is a Saint, from whom many have received favours. I have been more than once invited to speak on Fr. Alvares to the congregation in St. Mary's church in Ribandar and can bear witness to the high regard, nay veneration, in which he is held by the Syrian Orthodox Christians. In fact, spurred by Fr. T.E. Issak of St. Mary's church, Ribandar, and Fr. Lazarus of the church of the same invocation in Brahmawar, I undertook to write and publish this biographical account of Fr. Alvares, a figure for whom I have felt a strange fascination since I did some research work for an article on the "Sedition" in a series on the Revolts in Goa for the monthly "Goa Today", some twenty years ago.

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## FR. ALVARES AS I KNEW HIM

### Personal Reminiscences

Born in 1912, now in my mid-70's, I had the proud privilege and good fortune of knowing the great man that Fr. Alvares was, then well past 80, in the last years of his life, before his death in 1923. I vividly remember his rather short, but stockily built and quite impressive figure, with a flowing beard, wearing a black cassock, worn out and stained in several places, a staff in his right hand and a bowl in the left, begging from door to door, in order to support himself as well as the poor he had taken under his care.

My father (1867-1921), a pharmacist by profession, was then running his pharmacy, established in 1896, in Cunha Rivara Road, which still retains its old name, in what was then known as *Largo da Camara* (Municipal Square), around the Garcia de Orta Garden, on the southern side of which stood the imposing building, with a clock tower of the *Camara Municipal* (Municipal Corporation) of Ilhas rhetorically referred to as the 1st Senate of Goa, on all solemn occasions.

We lived on the first floor of the house of the Ferreiras of Ponolem, while the pharmacy was on the ground floor in a large compartment, now divided into two and occupied by Ferrals & Co. and Modern Laundry. The compartment had then a window and a door, and my father sat at a table in a wooden revolving chair in front of the window while the door had a wooden fencing making an enclosure for the customers.

Still a child below 10 (I was 9 when my father died) I used to play on the footpath in front of our house and would see, every morning, Fr. Alvares, on his daily begging round, come and stop in



front of the pharmacy window, greet my father;— and stretch out his trembling hand with the bowl. My father would greet him in turn and give him invariably one rupee.

Those were the days when round the municipal garden there were several shops, all, except one, owned by Christians. On the Cunha Rivara Road, on the western side of the square, were the Afonso Restaurant, next to the Pharmacy, then the shop of oculist Dias with the much sought-after *disticar* (evil eye dispeller) Sequeira, then the Hindu Pharmacy, with which the celebrated Ayurvedic doctor Dada Vaidya of Ponda was associated, and on the opposite Conde de Torres Novas Road now renamed Dr. Domingos Roque de Souza Road the shops of Velho e Filhos, wine and provision dealers, Braganza e Cia. and Pereira de Andrade, both stationers, Eugenio de Melo, selling religious articles (now Champs dealing in sports goods), then Coelho e Cia., a bar, with another bar, Jasso, on the other side of the road in a corner of the garden, then Altino Coelho, a book seller, and Sapataria Moderna.

With many shops around, like those of Artur Viegas, Gonsalves Potioth and Heitor Peres, Sadasiva Borno, Suriaji Poi Bolo and Gonum Vaglo, Laljee Devraj, Abdullabhai Laljee and Habib Veljee, and the two Sindhis, known as Delhis, *Grande* (Hoondamal) and *Pequeno* (Naturmal), and on the road facing the Mandovi Cristovao Fernandes and J.J. da Cunha, this was indeed the main shopping centre of Panjim, and Fr. Alvares was always to be seen moving around, every morning, day after day, with his begging bowl.

Two incidents, much talked about in my childhood days, may be recalled here, one concerning a shop-keeper and the other another great son of Goa, Dr. Antonio Floriano de Noronha (1873-1931), then holding the high post of *Presidente da Rela-*

*ção* (Chief Justice) and who, incidentally, because of his religious ideas, would also be buried in the same secluded corner of Santa Ines cemetery, next to Fr. Alvares.

It is said that once an enraged shop-keeper, busy with his customers, instead of dropping a coin in Fr. Alvares' bowl, spat in it. Without losing countenance on the face of such an outrageous act, the saintly priest gently told the businessman: "All right, I shall keep this for me. Now, you give something for my poor." Deeply impressed by the humility and dedication to the cause of the poor on the part of Fr. Alvares, the shop-keeper apologized and contributed generously.

One of the private houses Fr. Alvares would never miss was that of Antonio de Noronha, his co-villager, in Campal. One Sunday, partly not to be disturbed in his daily busy routine work and partly to spare the old and sickly man the trouble of coming to his house every morning, Noronha gave Fr. Alvares a note of ten rupees in a lump sum telling him that, that was for the whole week and that, therefore, he must not come till the next Sunday, which he promised. And then, Fr. Alvares thanked and left, but by the time he reached the old civil jail building, now the military hospital, he found himself surrounded by about a dozen beggars and parted with all the money he had till then collected. This was witnessed by the jail keeper, Ligorio Soares, who reported the matter to the Chief Justice that very same evening, but Noronha just smiled indulgently, for he knew very well Fr. Alvares' nature and that he would keep his promise. Which he did, not showing his face for the next seven days.

Though then a young boy, residing very near the Municipal Corporation building, where Fr.



Alvares' body lay in state for full 24 hours, to enable people to pay him their last homage, I also remember the very touching scenes witnessed when thousands filed past his coffin, including a large number of poor people whom he had helped, foremost among the mourners being the old woman servant with her widowed daughter and grandchildren, all of them continuously crying and praying.

I also remember that, when I told my mother that I wanted to attend the funeral, she, a very devout lady, had qualms of conscience because Fr. Alvares was dubbed a schismatic or heretic. She, therefore, sought the advice of the Panjim parish priest, Fr. Antonio Leandro da Rosa, who told her that there was no bar to any Catholic taking part in the funeral procession so long as there were no anti-Catholic demonstrations. Incidentally, the same thing happened when Antonio de Noronha died, about a decade later, and had a civil funeral, which I also attended.

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## FR. ALVARES' PUBLICATIONS

### Periodicals

"*A Cruz*" (*The Cross*) - a tabloid fortnightly started by the Military Chaplain, Fr. Manuel Agostinho de Carvalho, on 15-7-1878. Taken over by Fr. Alvares on 14-6-1877. Turned into a full size (weekly) "periodical devoted to the defence of religio-social interests", from the issue of 5-9-1897 and claiming to be a "religious, social, literary and informative periodical of the Goa Archbishopric" from the issue of 4-6-1880, carrying on the left side of the title the Portuguese coat of arms and on the right the crest of the Archbishopric. Folded up with the issue of 18-7-1882. It carried Bulls and Briefs of the reigning Pope as well as Pastorals of the Goa Archbishop and other Portuguese bishops and particularly from that of Funchal, to which Goa once belonged. It had a liturgical and an informative section and, besides the editorial, published contributions from Ismael Gracias, Wenceslau Proenca and others.

"*A Verdade*" (*The Truth*) - Responsável : J.U. Gonsalves e Patrício; Redactor : F.X.L. Rego; Encarregado : I.L. Alvares. Launched to replace "*A Cruz*", when this was banned by Archbishop Valente, on 16-7-1882, as a "newspaper devoted to the defence of public interests". Went on till 24-9-1885. It carried two quotations, one from Camoens: "A verdade que encontro nua e pura/Vence toda a grandiloqua escritura". (The truth as I find naked and pure/vanquishes all grandiloquent scripture) and the other from Rousseau: "Quando se diz dos negócios d'Estado, que me importa?/Devese contar que o Estado está perdido". (When one talks about the affairs of the State/what does it matter to me?/One must say that the State is doomed).

"*O Progresso de Goa*" (*Goa's Progress*) - a weekly published from 1883 or 1885 upto 1886.



"The Times of Goa" - idem, being a kind of English version of the preceding one, for circulation in the then British India. No copies of these two short-lived periodicals could be traced anywhere in Goa.

"O Brado Indiano" (The Indian Outcry) - a political, industrial and agricultural weekly, started on 15-12-1894 and lasting till 12-10-1895. Highly critical of both civil and ecclesiastical authorities.

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"Direcções para o tratamento do cólera", Nova-Goa, 1885, an abridged English version of which under the title of "Directions for treatment of cholera" was published in Colombo in 1896. While the Portuguese original was running into 46 pages, the English version had only 19 pages.

"Prelecção sobre a situação actual no interior e exterior do Pais, lida nos paços da Camara Municipal das Ilhas, em Nova-Goa, aos 11 de Agosto de 1886". This was a lecture on the present situation, both internally and externally, in the country, read in the dhall of the Municipal Corporation in Panjim on 11-8-1886.

"Discurso acerca da questão do Padroado, proferido no comício de 21 de Outubro de 1886, inserto no folheto publicado com o título de Acta do comício", Nova-Goa, 1886. A speech delivered in a public meeting on 21-10-1886 and included in the minutes of proceedings of the same. A passionate defence of the rights of Padroado against the onslaughts of Propaganda.

"A Supremacia Universal na Igreja de Christo, provada pela Escripura, Tradição e Escriptores insuspeitos a Igreja Romana"; Colombo, 1893 (The Universal Supremacy of Christ's Church, as proved by the Scriptures, Tradition and writers not suspicious to the Roman Church). A spirited plea on behalf of

the Apostolic See of Antioch as against the claims of Rome.

"Antioch and Rome" - the same plea in English, published also in Colombo in the same year.

"Mandioca, o valor da produção da sua cultura por um acre e 2 mil rupias e é 6 vezes mais do que o das culturas de arroz e trigo. Povo de Goa! urge e trabalha", Bastorá, 1916. A second edition with 38, instead of only 20 pages, appeared in 1917 under a slightly different title: "O Valor da produção da sua cultura é superior ao de todas outras plantas frutíferas". These two booklets give facts and figures about the cultivation of manioc, of which Fr. Alvares had become a champion in the last years of his life, appealing to the people of Goa to "rise and work" to overcome the food crisis.

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## N O T E S

1. - In chronological order, the revolts and counter-revolts, coups and counter-coups, revolutionary and counter-revolutionary movements were: Gomes Freire Conspiracy (1817); Oporto Revolt (1820), whence vintismo; Liberal Constitution (1822), constitutionalismo; Vilafrancada (1823); Abrilada (1824); Constitutional Charter 1826, cartismo; reestablishment of Absolutism by Dom Miguel (1828); Belfastada (1828); Evora Monte Convention, banishment of Dom Miguel (1834); Belenzada (1836); September Revolution (1836) setembrismo; Marshals' Revolt (1837); Costa Cabral's dictatorship (1838), cabralismo; Maria da Fonte (1846); Patuleia (1847); end of Civil war with the Gramido Convention (1847); Marshal Saldanha's Revolt (1851); Regeneracao (1851).

2 - While in the birth certificate, taken by me, Fr. Alvares' mother's name is given as Marinha, in some other records Maria-ninha appears instead. In the death certificate, also taken by me, however, her name is shown as Ana Maria, but Maria Ana is also found elsewhere. The Alvares' family may be regarded as extinguished, the last lineal descendant with this surname being Vicente Alvares, son of Antonio Caetano Alvares, a nephew of Fr. Alvares, living in a portion of the ancestral house in Verna, rebuilt in 1925 by Joao Batista Alvares, a nephew of Fr. Alvares. But a portion of the old house, where Fr. Alvares was born, is still standing, though in a rather delapidated condition.

3 - In his early public life, Fr. Alvares was a convinced anti-Liberal and counter-revolutionary, as shown by his writings. Once he deprecated "the much vaunted freedom of the heart, thought, words and action which was the only idol worshipped" at the time ("A Cruz", 5-9-1879). In another issue, he mentions "profanations, sacrileges, unfaithfulness, impiety and injustice as the legitimate children of Liberalism". (Id. 13-8-1879). On the Padroado, his views may be compared with those of a character in Francisco Luis Gomes' novel "Os Brannanes", the Venerable Frei Francisco de Santa Catarina, who supported the Padroado with all the strenght of his patriotism; but at the same time he felt that when the Patron became negligent in the discharge of his duties, he ought to lose the Patronage. In fact, it did not take him a long time to realize that, under some Governors and Archbishops, only despotic will prevailed and that the Padroado authorities had greatly neglected some of their old parishes, as was the case of Brahmawar.

4 - An interesting sequel to this case was that Fr. Alvares' lawyer, Sertorio Coelho, whom Capt. Gomes da Costa thought to belong to the editorial staff of "O Brado Indiano", was also arrested on charges of drunkenness. But he too was acquitted by the same judge, Diogo Gomes de Meneses.